

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07
LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 IOE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 L-03
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 OMB-01
HEW-04 /085 W

-----011342Z 005893 /50

P R 011048Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4753

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 FREETOWN 0371

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB ILO AF SL

SUBJ: HOROWITZ VISIT: PRESIDENT STEVENS PROMISES SUPPORT TO
HELP KEEP THE US IN ILO

1. SUMMARY: US ILO REP HOROWITZ MADE A FORCEFUL AND EFFECTIVE
PRESENTATION OF US CONCERNS AND CONVICTIONS REGARDING CONTINUED
U.S. MEMBERSHIP IN THE ILO TO PRESIDENT STEVENS, FOREIGN
MINISTER MINAH AND LABOR MINISTER GOBIO-LAMIN. ALTHOUGH
RESTRUCTURING IS A MAJOR DESIRE OF STEVENS, HE APPEARS MORE
CONCERNED WITH KEEPING THE US IN THE ORGANIZATION AND RETAIN-
ING ILO VIABILITY. HE PROMISED SIERRA LEONE'S SUPPORT TO HELP
KEEP THE US IN THE ILO. GOBIO-LAMIN WAS LESS FORTHCOMING AND
CLEARLY FEELS RESTRUCTURING AND NOT ADHERENCE TO PRINCIPLES
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IS THE MAJOR PROBLEM. IF STEVENS CAN KEEP GOBIO-LAMIN UNDER
CONTROL, THE GOSL WILL BE AS HELPFUL AS IT CAN. END SUMMARY

2. US REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ILO DANIEL HOROWITZ AND AMBASSADOR
SAMUELS MET JOINTLY WITH PRESIDENT SIAKA STEVENS, MINISTER OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS FRANCIS MINAH, AND MINISTER OF LABOR GEORGE
GOVIO-LAMIN JANUARY 26 TO DISCUSS THE REASONS UNDERLYING

SUBMISSION OF THE US LETTER OF INTENT TO WITHDRAW FROM THE ILO, AND US HOPES THAT THE DISTURBING TENDENCIES IN THE ILO COULD BE REVERSED. HOROWITZ MADE A FORCEFUL AND EFFECTIVE EXPOSITION OF US CONCERNS AND CONVICTIONS. HE CITED THE INCREASING TENDENCY OF THE ILO TO ERODE THE TRIPARTITE NATURE OF ILO REPRESENTATION, TO EXEMPT SELECTIVELY SOME NATIONS FROM FULFILLING STANDARDS AND CONVENTIONS, TO CONDEMN SOME NATIONS WITHOUT INVESTIGATION, AND TO INJECT POLITICAL ISSUES HAVING NO RELEVANCE TO THE LABOR FIELD INTO DELIBERATIONS.

3. HOROWITZ SAID THE US HAD MADE EVERY EFFORT TO CHANGE THIS PATTERN, BUT ITS BELIEF THAT IT HAD NOT SUCCEEDED HAD PROMPTED THE NOTICE OF INTENT TO WITHDRAW. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE US DID NOT WANT TO LEAVE THE ILO AND THAT HIS VISIT TO SIERRA LEONE AND OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES WAS PART OF A MAXIMUM EFFORT TO CLARIFY OUR CONCERNS AND POSITIONS IN THE HOPE THAT WE WOULD FIND A MAJORITY SHARED OUR VIEWS. HE NOTED THAT THE FEBRUARY MEETING OF THE ILO GOVERNING BOARD WOULD HAVE BEFORE IT TWO ISSUES THAT WOULD PROVIDE CLEAR INDICATIONS WHETHER OUR HOPES WOULD BE REALIZED: THE REVISION OF ARTICLE 17 TO ESTABLISH RECEIVABLE AND NON-RECEIVABLE CATEGORIES OF RESOLUTIONS, AND THE DISPOSITION OF THE 1974 RESOLUTION CONDEMNING WITHOUT INVESTIGATION ISRAELI EMPLOYMENT POLICIES IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.

4. MINISTER OF LABOR GOBIO-LAMIN REPLIED THAT THE ILO HAD EVOLVED CONSIDERABLY SINCE IT WAS FOUNDED IN 1919 AND SINCE THE US JOINED IN 1934. HE SAID DIFFERENT COUNTRIES HAD DIFFERENT PRINCIPLES AND THAT SIERRA LEONE FOLLOWED AFRICAN PRINCIPLES. CONFIDENTIAL

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MANY ISSUES HAD ARISEN ON QUESTIONS OF STRUCTURE OF THE ILO, AND HE EXPRESSED HIS BELIEF THAT AFRICAN NATIONS WERE NOT FULLY REPRESENTED ON THE GOVERNING BODY. HE NOTED THAT THE QUESTION OF STRUCTURE WAS UNDER REVIEW BY THE GOVERNING BODY AND CONCEDED THAT DEVELOPING NATIONS WERE GAINING INCREASED REPRESENTATION. HE ADDED THAT THE QUESTION OF STRUCTURE WAS AN EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS AND SUBJECT TO ADDITIONAL CONSULTATION AND DISCUSSION. HE OPINED THAT US WITHDRAWAL WOULD NOT SAVE THE PRINCIPLES OF THE ILO IT WISHED TO RETAIN AND WOULD BE DANGEROUS TO THE ENTIRE LABOR MOVEMENT. HE HOPED THE THE US WOULD RECONSIDER ITS INTENTION TO WITHDRAW.

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-----011341Z 005979 /50

P R 011048Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
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5. HOROWITZ ANSWERED GOBIO-LAMIN'S STATEMENT BY ALLUDING TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S QUOTATION OF HIS FORMER SCHOOL TEACHER IN HIS INAUGURAL ADDRESS. HOROWITZ SAID THE QUESTION OF STRUCTURE WAS A REFLECTION OF THE CHANGING TIMES, BUT THAT PRINCIPLES WERE DIFFERENT AND ENDURED CHANGES. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE GOVERNING BODY HAD BEEN INCREASED FOUR TIMES SINCE THE END OF WORLD WAR 88 AND THAT ADDITIONAL CHANGES WOULD COME ABOUT THROUGH CONSULTATION AND NOT CONFRONTATION. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE US INTENTION TO WITHDRAW WAS NOT A THREAT BUT AN INESCAPABLE RESULT OF THE US BELIEF THAT A MAJORITY OF MEMBERS DID NOT SHARE OUR PRINCIPLES. HE REITERATED THE DESIRE OF THE US TO REMAIN IN THE ILO IF A VISIBLE DEMONSTRATION OF MAJORITY SUPPORT FOR ILO PRINCIPLES WERE FORTHCOMING.

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6. PRESIDENT STEVENS, SPEAKING DIRECTLY TO GOBIO-LAMIN EMPHASIZED THAT THE US WANTED TO REMAIN IN THE ILO BUT APPARENTLY WAS FINDING IT IMPOSSIBLE TO BE USEFUL. HE SPOKE OF THE TYRANNY OF THOSE WHO BY THEIR ONE VOTE THOUGHT THEY REPRESENTED THE MAJORITY. HE TOLD BOTH MINAH AND GOBIO-LAMIN THAT SIERRA LEONE SHOULD HELP THE US EXPLAIN ITS CONCERNS AND INTENTIONS TO OTHER AFRICAN NATIONS. THE US, HE SAID, FACED A DIFFICULT PERIOD SINCE,

WHEN THE OTHER SIDE DID NOT GET WHAT IT WANTED IN THE UNGA, IT ATTACKED IN THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES. THE SAME SITUATION APPLIED TO THE RECENT UNESCO MEETING IN NAIROBI, HE CONTINUED, EXCEPT THERE THE AFRICAN NATIONS WERE DISILLUSIONED (BY THE ARABS) AND SO SHOWED BY THEIR VOTE. WITH FEELING, HE SAID THAT THIRD WORLD NATIONS NEEDED TO MEET AMONG THEMSELVES AND DECIDE WHERE THEY REALLY STOOD ON WORLD ISSUED.

7. TURNING DIRECTLY TO HOROWITZ, STEVENS SAID THAT IF THE US WERE NOT A MEMBER OF AN ORGANIZATION, THE ORGANIZATION WOULD NOT BE INTERNATIONAL. IF THE US WITHDREW FROM THE ILO, THE ILO WOULD BE WRECKED. HE SAID SOME FORMULA HAD TO BE FOUND TO ASSURE EVERYONE'S VOICE WAS HEARD AND THAT NATIONS RECEIVED A FAIR HEARING. SIERRA LEONE, HE CONTINUED, WANTED THE ENTIRE ILO CONSTITUTION REVIEWED, BUT THE BASIC PRINCIPLES WERE NOT IN QUESTION; ONLY THE METHODS. HE TOLD HOROWITZ THAT HE COULD COUNT ON SIERRA LEONE TO GIVE ALL THE HELP IT COULD, TO USE ITS INFLUENCE WHERE IT COULD, AND TO MARSHALL WHAT ASSISTANCE IT COULD.

8. FOREIGN MINISTER MINAH ADDED THE OBSERVATION THAT THE BASIC PROBLEM DEVELOPED WHEN NATIONS TRIED TO OPERATE IN COUNTER-VENTION OF EXISTING RULES. SIERRA LEONE, HE SAID, ALWAYS HAD ADOPTED THE POSITION THAT IT OPERATED WITHIN ESTABLISHED RULES. WHEN IT WANTED THOSE RULES CHANGED, IT TRIED TO DO SO LEGITIMATELY. OTHERWISE CHAOS WOULD RESULT. STEVENS CONCLUDED THE MEETING BY REMARKING THAT: "QUOTE A FEW PEOPLE ARE IN THE ILO AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS THANKS TO THE US AND THE PROTECTION IT AFFORDS."

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9. EMBASSY COMMENT: HOROWITZ'S VISIT WENT AS WELL AS ONE COULD REASONABLY EXPECT. GOBIO-LAMIN CONTINUES TO PLAY AN OPPORTUNISTIC AND UNPREDICTABLE ROLE AND SEEMS TO WANT TO LINK STRUCTURAL CHANGES TO OTHER ILO ISSUES. BUT STEVENS APPEARS AWARE OF THIS AND POINTEDLY TOLD GOBIO-LAMIN TO CONFER WITH HIM BEFORE THE FEBRUARY GOVERNING BOARD MEETING. STEVENS PROMISED HIS SUPPORT AND WE BELIEVE HE WILL HONOR HIS PLEDGE IF HE CAN KEEP GOBIO-LAMIN UNDER TIGHT CONTROL. HOPEFULLY, AS ONE OF THE GRAND OLD MEN OF THE AFRICAN LABOR MOVEMENT, HIS VIEWS WILL CARRY WEIGHT WITHIN AFRICAN LABOR CIRCLES.

SAMUELS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEMBERSHIP, VISITS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATIONS
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3443836
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HOROWITZ VISIT: PRESIDENT STEVENS PROMISES SUPPORT TO HELP KEEP THE US IN ILO
TAGS: ELAB, XA, SL, US, ILO, (STEVENS, SIAKA P), (HOROWITZ, DANIEL L)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/0b6c08ce-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009